A COMPARISON OF MENNONITE AND MORMON COLONIES IN NORTHERN MEXICO

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A COMPARISON OF MENNONITE AND MORMON COLONIES

IN NORTHERN MEXICO

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

In Northern Mexico two culturally isolated communities exist side-by-side; the Old Colony Mennonites (OCM) and the Mormons or Latter-day Saints (LDS). Both groups are of Northern European extraction with the OCM being Germanic and the LDS mostly Anglo-Saxon. Their mother tongues reflect their background; the OCM speak a German dialect while the Mormons speak English. Both groups migrated en masse to escape governmental infringement upon their respective ways of life, an infringement which they defined as religious persecution. Each group has a distinct religious belief system which defines their values and behaviors. Yet, their respective views towards the outside world differ immensely.

Both groups have maintained their respective cultures at their present locations for roughly one hundred years although the LDS have been in Mexico for slightly longer than the OCM. Both groups can be identified by a form of boundary maintenance which differs significantly in accordance with their particular belief systems. A "member in good standing" or compliant Old Colony Mennonite remains within the colony

and adopts its ultra conservative lifestyle while a faithful Mormon must venture into the outside world to minister to the Gentiles (non-Mormons) while maintaining his traditional beliefs.

W. I. Thomas maintains that "What men define as real is real in its consequences" (Kephart and Zellner, 1991:2). Consequently, the question arises as to how the beliefs of one group produce group cohesion by erecting physical and cultural barriers between them and the larger society while the other group produces group cohesion by leaving the protective colony and articulating its activities with the larger society.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology I have chosen to use for this thesis is ethnographic in nature. The data presented are a synthesis of secondary sources, of information gathered from informants, and of my own experiences and background. Descriptive data of the Old Colony Mennonites' and Latter-day Saints' belief systems will be compared in order to examine the function of belief systems in maintaining group cohesion and boundary maintenance.

I come from a Mennonite community and now live in the larger society. Although, the "group" from which I came is a loosely associated community of Mennonite families dispersed throughout the non-Mennonite community (not a colony or closed village community), the roots of my background and those of

the OCM are similar. To assist my understanding of the Latter-day Saints, I spent many hours discussing LDS beliefs with local Mormon church leaders. Over a three year period I visited several OCM and LDS communities four times, informally talked with leaders and residents, and recorded observational notes each evening and while riding the bus between communities.

To the extent that observable group cohesion reflects the common belief system of the group's members and to the extent that a common belief system perpetuates group cohesion, an isolated religious community is a convenient population for studying the mechanisms employed by groups in maintaining group cohesiveness. With this in mind, the Old Colony Mennonites are an ideal population for the study of boundary maintenance (group cohesion). However, for comparison purposes both the Old Colony Mennonites and the Latter-day Saints were chosen for this study. Both groups share the same ecological niche of the Chihuahuan desert and proximity to El Paso, Texas. Their proximity contributes to the accessibility of a wealth of written information locally (library), allows me the privilege of visiting some of their communities, and many Mormons in the El Paso region trace their origins to the Mormon colonies in Mexico.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Three distinct approaches might be used in the

comparative study of OCM and LDS colonies in northern Mexico. Formal sociology focuses on the processes involved in the groups' adaptation to the realities of the nation in which they must operate; theories of social movements lend a historical, dynamic dimension to the institutionalized traditions which hold these "utopian communities" together; and the geographical framework of isolation might focus on "cultural encystments" which exist precariously within a host country or society. Comparison of these two isolated cultural systems is possible to varying degrees within all three of these theoretical frameworks.

Formal sociology is a field of endeavor, originated by Georg Simmel, which focuses on the processes whose consequence is cohesion or disintegration between entities in a superordinate- subordinate relationship. In Mexico, the OCM are totally subordinate to federal and state mandates (such as those establishing special military exemption for OCM) and the OCM practice of self-exclusion creates an uneasy milieu of potential conflict between their highly vulnerable sub-culture and the larger Mexican nation. Although the LDS colonies are also subordinate to Mexican authorities, their power and influence through their external linkages (such as Mormon professionals in the larger community and non-Mormon graduates from their schools, both in Mexico and the United States) has reduced their vulnerability considerably as they have achieved

an uneasy accommodation with Mexico.

Social movements that entail liberation from the constraints of society often result in the birth of utopian communities, communities based on idealistic beliefs that are designed to achieve perfect harmony and equality. However, through time these dynamic beliefs crystalize into institutionalized traditions and uncompromising values. Successive generations must either resist change to these institutionalized practices or develop internalized beliefs which allow members to adapt to new conditions or the utopian community will die. This is the case for both the LDS and the OCM colonies.

In their book, Extraordinary Groups: An Examination of Unconventional Life-styles, Kephart and Zellner (1991) discuss several groups, mostly utopian communities of the nineteenth century. Those that survive follow a series of phases from an initial movement to a mature sub-society. Usually at its inception, a group reacts to some existing social condition and follows some charismatic leader who has the ability to unify the members. Once a group has emerged, its beliefs and values become reified, thus creating social institutions or systems. By intergenerational internalization of its "peculiar" values its members define areas of greatest importance and of greatest good. How this group perceives the powers of good and evil defines what is real in the world.

This in turn defines the group's acceptance or rejection of change. An example of this used by Kephart and Zellner is that of the Old Order Amish and their taboo against the ownership of automobiles. The Amish believe that if this taboo were lifted they would lose their way of life. This belief, not a rational examination of the potential effects of ownership on their quality of life, determines how the Amish behave towards automobiles.

Another characteristic of these groups that Kephart and Zellner discuss has to do with the primary and secondary group identity. Usually primary group identity is reserved for a small close group of family and friends. In utopian groups, they found that all the individuals within the group assume a primary group reference group identity. Consequently, there develops a "we" sense among the members and all non-members become "they."

Kai Erikson (1966), in his deviance study of the New England Puritans, suggests that over time the "we" and "they" sense diffuses into the internal identity of the group. While he is primarily concerned with a group's need for a class of deviants in order to define acceptable behavior for the group, this shifting to an internal "they" as well as an ever changing definition of what is deviant suggests one form of resisting change that may develop in an established utopian group. Similarly, Georg Simmel (1971) referred to a member of a group who interacts outside the group -- either literally

through economic ties as is the case of a trader or figuratively as is the case of the person who objectively perceives and understands situations and conditions -- as the "stranger." Therefore, the "stranger" is not bound to the group and is still a member of the group.

The fact that some groups such as the Old Colony Mennonites and the Latter-day Saints survive generation after generation suggests that their traditional beliefs are not rational choices left to the individual members to follow or reject, but rather are internalized through guarded socialization from birth until they have reached a given age. If a subculture allows external information sources to furnish data upon which choices are made, value dissonance occurs. Therefore, subcultures by definition maintain and safeguard their own beliefs which result in social systems different from those of the larger society. Thus, when discussing subcultures we are in effect studying what Simmel referred to as "little world[s] within the world" (Collins and Makowsky, 1989:169).

Another possible theoretical approach can be conceptualized as geographical isolation of a system within a system. This approach was used by B. Carmon Hardy (1965) in his study of the early Mormon colonies in Mexico. He coined the term "encystment" to characterize the geographical isolation of a unique group within a larger society. Such a

condition of the OCM and LDS in northern Mexico is not unlike that of modern day Israel surrounded by its Arab neighbors or the Hopi Indian reservation surrounded by the Navajo Indian land in the Four Corners country of the American Southwest.

While both social movement theory and "encystment" theory are involved in the development and survival of the OCM and LDS in northern Mexico, these two theoretical perspectives, either alone or together, only capture a superficial picture of how the beliefs of the OCM and the LDS produce two different forms of group cohesion. A more analytical approach should provide a greater in-depth look into elements of the internal systems themselves and what processes sustain their unique cultural lifestyles.

Charles Loomis (1960:31) described mechanisms which social systems used to maintain particular forms of group cohesion. He referred to these as boundary maintenance mechanisms, "the process whereby the identity of the social system is preserved and the characteristic interaction pattern maintained." In order for boundary maintenance to work the reciprocal process of accepting external values (socio-cultural linkages) must be tightly controlled from within. Loomis' concept of boundary maintenance applies to the social or cultural boundaries of a given social system; when referring to the physical spacial limits of a system Loomis uses the term territoriality.

The Old Colony Mennonites and the Latter-day Saints in Chihuahua, Mexico are cases that utilize strong boundary maintenance mechanisms for their own preservation. While the concrete characteristics of the interaction or the level of separation from the larger Mexican society is different for these two groups, the social cohesion through boundary maintenance is similar. This is the essence of Simmel's formal sociology. He maintained that the basic structures of interaction are the same from culture to culture; thus, when analyzing processes of interaction, one must separate the form of interaction from the content of interaction. In keeping with the dialectical quality of systems within a system (formal sociology), an element of boundary maintenance develops, a "we" and "they" mind-set. As stated earlier, social movements frequently develop in reaction to some social phenomenon or social conflict. For a social movement to evolve rather than unravel, social cohesion is necessary. The in-group identification by the members of a social movement gives rise to the institutionalization of beliefs and, with maturation of a movement, to patterned (traditionalized) behaviors. In cases such as the OCM and Mormons in northern Mexico, the in-group identification was compounded initially by their isolation or territoriality which then produced a homogeneity among those sharing the same space and time milieu (the essence of the concept of "cultural encystment"). In

turn, homogeneity contributes to the in-group identification, thus the boundary maintenance mechanisms become internalized and traditionalized over time.

Both the Old Colony Mennonites and the Latter-day Saints are religious groups with utopian beginnings whose traditional beliefs and values of their forefathers have been institutionalized into a unique lifestyle. The "good" OCM must stay within his "encysted" community and endeavor to maintain isolation (territoriality) from the outside world as well as social isolation (boundary maintenance). On the other hand, the "good" Mormon must improve himself through increased education which requires him to venture beyond the colony limits (territoriality) and mix with the outside world, all the while maintaining his internalized Mormon identity (boundary maintenance).

The above theoretical concepts will enable me to describe and compare the Mennonite and Mormon colonies and the processes used by each in maintaining their system. In chapter two I will present the historical backgrounds of both religious groups and in chapter three I will compare the institutionalized boundary maintenance mechanisms of each of the two religious-based colonies.

Chapter Two

BACKGROUND HISTORY: MENNONITES AND MORMONS IN MEXICO

> According to Emile Durkheim, a religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden -- beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church all those who adhere to them (1968:62).

The Old Colony Mennonites and the Latter-day Saints each have a belief system that produces group cohesion.

Both the Mennonite (OCM) and Mormon (LDS) colonies in northern Mexico reflect a religion and church structure which is not found in traditional Catholic or Protestant religions in America. This chapter will explore the historical background of both religious groups to identify those religious elements and church structures which contribute to the degree of social cohesion found with each of the colonies.

MENNONITES: DEVELOPMENTS AND MIGRATIONS

The Old Colony Mennonites are a distinct subculture within a host (Mexican) culture who have their own values, beliefs, and norms. The essential bedrock of their current Weltanschauung is found in their Anabaptist roots in Holland and Prussia. Their village structure and isolationistic perspective developed in Russia and have remained relatively

unchanged for over 200 years.

The Mennonite movement grew out of early Anabaptist philosophies of the sixteenth century European Reformation. The Anabaptists differed from other Reformation groups in their belief and practice of the "believer's baptism" which contended that only persons old enough to understand the significance of baptism should be baptized. Anabaptists therefore rebaptized adults who were baptized as children and did not allow their children to be baptized.

While usually referred to as a movement, Anabaptism initially was many simultaneous movements throughout Dutch and German speaking Europe. There were many young Anabaptist leaders. As Redekop points out, "few [leaders] lived past the age of thirty and hence could hardly have become ideological or charismatic leaders of the movement" (1989:4-6). Menno Simons, a Dutch ex-Catholic priest, was one of the few who survived beyond the age of thirty.

Eventually a general uniformity developed among one branch of the Anabaptists, the pacifistic branch. Not only did this group believe in baptism after the age of accountability (adult baptism), this pacifistic group emphasized nonviolence and the separation of church and state. This emphasis derives from their belief that one should have no allegiance other than to God coupled with a belief that a believers' church is one of brotherhood or of equals in

Christ. The pacifistic Anabaptists interpreted this to mean that they had no right to kill another human being (only God had this right). Consequently they refused to participate in military service since as soldiers they could potentially kill others, implying an allegiance to a country above that of God.

Frequently, the refusal of the pacifistic Anabaptists to participate in military service was seen as disloyalty by the church and treason by the governments of the area. The mainstream Protestant churches and the Catholic church considered the pacifistic Anabaptists to be heretics. All of these things combined often led to Anabaptists being tried in courts of law and then executed.

Menno Simons (1492-1559), a significant leader of pacifism in Holland and Northern Germany (Hillerbrand, 1987; Smith, 1950; Schmiedehaus, 1954),

> succeeded in consolidating the often rather vague beliefs of various Anabaptist congregations into a distinct system, thus providing a common basis for a closer co-operation between originally separate sects (Francis, 1948:103).

Consequently, in the 1540s, Countess Anna of Friesland began calling the pacifistic Anabaptists by the name of Menists (Dyck, 1987; Smith, 1950; Redekop, 1989). The label Menists ultimately evolved into the name, Mennonite. Thus Mennonite became associated with the entire menagerie of pacifistic

Anabaptists (excluding the Hutterites, followers of Jacob Hutter, and Amish, followers of Jacob Ammon); not an indicator of a formally unified body or denomination, but a category of groups with a common religious philosophy. Each local group retained their level of relative individualism somewhat similar to congregationalism in the larger Protestant movement.

It is important to remember Anabaptist beliefs are held by various factions, and even among Old Colony settlements variations in traditions and taboos exist. However, the focus of this study is on the Old Colony Mennonites in the northern Mexico region. Therefore, migrations mentioned throughout this thesis refer only to the groups from whom the OCM descend.[1]

The history of Mennonites contains many accounts of persecution for their faith, both real and imagined, and repeated relocation to escape further persecution. The segment of Mennonites from which the Old Colony developed originated in Holland and moved to West Prussia in 1539 (Redekop, 1969). Here they became proficient farmers and adopted many Prussian customs including the language, Low German.

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[1]In 1980, Calvin Redekop counted 33 distinct divisions in the Anabaptist-Mennonite "family." For a schematic view of this "family-tree" see Redekop's book (1989:32-33).

By the mid-1700s Prussia was exerting pressure upon the Mennonites to participate in military service. The Mennonites' pacifist stance led to harassment and to their not being "allowed land [needed] for expansion due to population growth..." (Redekop, 1969:5). This increasing pressure to participate in military service led many Mennonites to consider emigration. Fortunately for the Mennonites, Czarina Katherine or "Mother Katrina" of Russia offered them land and the special privileges of exemption from military service, self-government, and autonomy in their churches and schools (religious freedom). There were two stipulations in this agreement: they were not to proselytize in Russia and if anyone married a Russian the special privileges would not apply to the spouse or to the children. This resulted in many Mennonites migrating to Russia in 1789 (Redekop, 1969; Sawatzky, 1971).

Living conditions were extremely difficult in Russia. To assure survival, the Mennonites developed a village or colony system of shared privileges and obligations. Smith explains it as follows:

> At first, following their Prussian custom, each family started to live on its own farm; but the need for protection against marauders drove them to settle in small groups, some fifteen to thirty families to a village. Eight villages were thus

> laid out in the beginning, with Chortitza [(the first Mennonite community in Russia)] as the center of the settlement... (Smith, 1950:392).

The pattern for the villages consisted of one street with the individual family lots on either side. These lots contained the house, barn, and shop (under one roof) with gardens, and fruit orchards adjacent to it. The farmland was divided into strips radiating from the village and distributed so that each family had equally fertile soil. Each village also contained a school building and a commons that was used as a common pasture until it was needed for expansion. There was a church in some villages which was shared with several neighboring villages (Schmiedehaus, 1954).

> Each village became a governing unit for the control of schools, roads and poor relief; for the appointment of municipal herders, fire overseers, and village clerks, apportioning the arable farm lots and distributing surplus lands (Smith, 1950:412).

The landowners elected the village magistrate (Schulze) or mayor and determined the local regulations at town meetings. Village representatives elected the Gebietsant which consisted of a superintendent (Oberschulze), assistants, and clerks. The Gebietsant governed a district (Gebiet) or group of villages where it administered corporal

punishment, held court, and regulated local matters that "concerned the villages in common" (Smith, 1950:412-413).

For almost one hundred years the Mennonites in Russia preserved their way of life and prospered. However, by the mid-1800s the Mennonites found their privileged status being seriously threatened by the changing political climate in Russia. This included a general pressure to "Russianize" all ethnic groups within its borders. With regard to Mennonites the task for Russia was to force them to give military service and to replace the traditional Mennonite language (German) with the official Russian language in their schools. Besides this external nationalistic pressure, Mennonites were also facing a mounting internal problem of an increasing landless population. As a result of these dilemmas, many members of the Mennonite community began to consider emigration as their only solution (Sawatzky, 1971).

At about the same time the Mennonites were planning to relocate elsewhere, the government of Canada was encouraging European immigrants to settle in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Consequently, the Canadian government promised the Russian Mennonites the special privilege of exemption from military service and autonomy in their schools (including use of the German language). In addition, Mennonites were guaranteed large blocks of land for settlements. Their problems were solved. Mennonites began migrating to Canada in 1874. Some

of the first to leave Russia were people from the Chortitza settlement or "old colony" (Redekop, 1969).

This first wave of Russian Mennonite migrants reproduced their traditional village structures and systems in Canada, including the frequent naming of villages after the ones they left behind in Russia. Gradually this first group to arrive became known as the Altkolonier Reinlaender Mennoniten Gemeinde or Old Colony Mennonites. By 1890 they had developed a strong sense of their own identity separate and apart from other Mennonite groups (Redekop, 1969).

For several decades Canada remained a refuge for the Old Colony Mennonites. However, World War I brought a nationalistic movement to Canada and the government began to demand that English, not German, be the teaching language in the Mennonite schools. They felt very threatened by this and looked for an alternative site for their colony.

They sent representatives to the United States, Mexico, and South America in search of land in large enough sections to accommodate their colony system and to ascertain which governments would insure them of the self-determination they desired. There was suitable land available in Mexico and President Obregón assured the OCM they would have religious freedom and privileged status in Mexico. As a result, in March of 1922 the first migration to Mexico took place (Redekop, 1969; Smith, 1950; Schmiedehaus, 1954). The largest

contingent went to Chihuahua and a somewhat smaller group settled in Durango.

In Mexico, as they had in Canada, the Old Colony Mennonites recreated their village patterns brought from Russia. They also attempted to maintain those traditional crops (such as oats and wheat) and farming methods which were successful in Russia, but the vast environmental differences between Mexico and Canada (or Russia and Prussia) resulted in several years of crop-failure. The OCM were forced to adapt to their new homeland. Thus, although Mexico was a traumatic adjustment for them, for the most part they have prospered by shifting to crops such as corn and beans.

The Old Colony Mennonites have strongly maintained the philosophy of brotherhood mentioned earlier. One characteristic of this concept is egalitarianism. Consequently, the church structure and social structure of the OCM is rather simple. The church structure and village structure (or social structure) are parallel if not intertwined. Therefore, to the extent that membership in the colony is tied to church membership, the Old Colony system is a somewhat closed theocracy.

Since the church and the community structures are parallel governing mechanisms, it is important to briefly outline the OCM structure and their governing units. For example, in 1966 in Chihuahua there were the Manitoba Plan

(colony), the Swift Plan, and the Nord Plan all of which followed the pattern of the early migrations from Canada to this area (Redekop, 1966). Each of these Plans was divided into several villages similar in structure and in pattern to those which developed in Russia many years before. Four to six villages make up a parish with a church building located in the center village. All male church members have voting rights which in practice means one vote for each family unit.

Church Structure

Each Plan has one bishop and several ministers who function as the ecclesiastical governance. These men circulate among the different churches for Sunday services or at events occurring on special religious holidays. In addition to the bishop and ministers, two other offices carry out the OCM church functions: the deacons and song leaders. Here too we see the same structure developed by Mennonites in Russia.

Each ecclesiastical office is occupied by an elected person chosen from a defined group of males. As a rule, ministers are selected from the group of song leaders with the person receiving the least votes becoming the deacon if both positions are vacant. The bishop is always chosen from the pool of ministers.

The position of bishop has the highest status in the community which traditionally translates into highest

decision-making power. In his religious role the most sacred Church rituals of giving communion and performing baptism are reserved for him alone. Despite the fact that he has no authority beyond that associated with his religious office, the bishop's control over the practice of banning[2] or excommunicating deviants ensures his continuing power and influence even though ministers, those of lesser ecclesiastical stature, also have the right of banning and excommunicating. However, ministers rarely exercise this right without a bishop's authorization.

The office of minister is given the responsible for conducting the regular church services. They may also perform marriages and funerals. The deacon's role consists of administering an alms fund, a fund collected for the sole purpose of assisting members financially in a time of crisis such as illness or hunger. For the most part this is not a very important fund in comparison to the other mutual aid funds (i.e. fire insurance, building and maintaining community physical structures, and the Waisenamt) maintained by the OCM.

Secular Structure

The secular governing structure is similar to that which developed in Russia.

> [Each village has] a Schult (mayor) who executes

[2]Banning is a religious sanction which prohibits members in good standing from associating with the person who is being banned.

> policy; a secretary, who keeps village records, collects fees, etc.; a fire insurance secretary; a teacher hired by the village; a manager for the cheese factory if the village has one; a superintendent of roads; a village cowherd; and other less permanent officers (Redekop, 1966:196).

When the Mennonites migrated from Prussia to Russia some of the first buildings they erected were schools. According to Smith (1950:415)), their reasons were to "perpetuate the German language" and to insure their children were raised in the Mennonite faith. One residual factor from the early Anabaptist movement was the belief that each individual should read and interpret the Bible himself (albeit within the Anabaptist context). This meant all the laity needed a rudimentary level of literacy. The subjects, materials, and structure of the Old Colony Mennonite schools are similar to those of their Prussian-Russian forefathers. Little has changed.

> The school system is under the direct supervision of the Lehrdienst [(bishop and several ministers)], which places responsibility for its control in the hands of two ministers and the village Schult [(mayor)], who visit the schools yearly, unannounced. Informal communication in the villages provides the ministers information about

> any deviant forms of education that are being practiced in the schools. If a teacher is found guilty of deviancy, he is called before the Dunnadagh [(Thursday evening meeting)]... (Redekop, 1969:74)

where he is confronted with his errancy. If he refuses to halt his deviancy he is dismissed from his duties as teacher.

This historical and structural overview of the Old Colony Mennonites provides the basis for a Weberian verstehen of their beliefs, values, and norms. Having thus examined the Old Colony Mennonites in Chihuahua, I will now explore the history and structure of another distinct subculture within a host culture, the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints (Mormons) in a similar manner.

MORMONS: DEVELOPMENTS AND MIGRATIONS

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormons) is a relatively new religious group whose belief systems include several aspects of the Weltanschauung of its members which differ from other Christian religions and their professional clergy. Therefore, before discussing the history and development of the LDS church, I will outline some of the theological aspects unique to the Mormon belief system.

Major Theological Differences

Theologically, three aspects -- the personality of God, the church organization, and the eternal nature of ordinances

-- give Mormonism its distinct philosophy or belief system. All three are inter-related concepts of their belief that they are members of the re-established one true church of Jesus Christ.

Personality of Deity. The personality of God encompasses the three separate personages of Deity (i.e. the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost). Included in this is the Mormon belief that mortals are the literal (not figurative) spiritual sons and daughters of Deity; thus implying, but not directly stating, that Deity also includes an Eternal Mother (Heeren, et al: 1984). They also believe that it is the family unit rather than the individual that progresses on after this Earthly life.

Unlike most Christian religions that believe revelations from God ended with the Bible and the early apostles, Latter-day Saints believe in continuous revelations from God to Latter-day prophets (i.e. a process which allows continual change). As such, several writings, believed to be sacred scriptures, are included in the Mormon teachings. These sacred scriptures are the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

The Book of Mormon is believed to be an ancient record containing the history of some early peoples of the Americas of Hebraic ancestry, which was made available to Joseph Smith for translation through divine assistance and revelation.

> The Pearl of Great Price contains what are alleged to be lost parts of the Pentateuch, some of which were transcribed and translated by the prophet from papyri found in mummy wrappings, some writings of Joseph Smith, and a statement of articles of faith (O'Dea, 1972: 125).

The Doctrine and Covenants contains what is believed to be revelations that occurred since the church was re-established (as apposed to ancient records). The overall content pertains to the governing and problem solving of the church and to leading the faithful life as a member. Included in this is the Word of Wisdom, a proscription which outlines a dietary guide and prohibits smoking and drinking (alcohol and caffeine). With only a few exceptions, such as Wilford Woodruff's Manifesto abolishing the further practice of polygyny, this sacred scripture is a record of their first prophet's, Joseph Smith's, revelations.

Volunteeristic church structure. A massive organization of volunteers constitutes the Mormon church structure; of necessity, it is bureaucratic. It should also be stressed that according to the Mormon belief system this is not a capricious theocratic hierarchy, but an organizing structure that coordinates and guides all levels of volunteer activities. The Church hierarchy is the formal structure for the flow of Church doctrine (Crapo, 1987) and for organizing

activities and mobilizing volunteers.

Essentially the two functional structures of this bureaucracy, the Church, consists of the ecclesiastical government (organizational unit) and of the local membership. The ecclesiastical governing body is organized on three levels (four if one includes the family unit). The General Authorities are at the top with the Stake (regional body) between the General Authorities and the Ward (local parish). These three levels of organization are each broken down into specific functionary positions. The local organization can be described as descending in responsibility from the bishop and leaders of the local congregation to each family and ultimately to each individual.

The General Authorities are headed by the First Presidency, the President or Prophet and his two counselors. When the president dies the First Presidency ceases to exist until the next President (the senior member of the Twelve Apostles) is appointed by the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, the next lower level in the organization, and he then chooses two new assistants.

Under the Apostles are the Councils of Seventy. Seven presidents (equal in authority) functionally carrying out the charges given them by the Quorum of Twelve Apostles (such as missionary work). They are also traveling representatives of the First Presidency to bi-annual conferences held at the

local Stakes and are given discretionary powers to select a new Stake president after a period of service of six to ten years.

Another functional unit of the General Authorities is the Presiding Bishopric which includes the Presiding Bishop and his two counselors and appointed assistants. The Presiding Bishopric has authority over the assets and welfare programs of the Church under policies established by the First Presidency. Also under the General Authorities of the church are general boards and committees in charge of all church buildings, church programs and activities that answer directly to the First Presidency. This then completes the top ecclesiastical strata of the LDS church -- the men who "actually run the church... the public as well as the private leadership" (Leone, 1979:37). These General Authorities are full-time ministers who receive a modest living allowance and expenses for their Church travels.

The second ecclesiastical structure is a governing body called the Stake. All authorities of the Stake as well as those of the local Wards are unpaid part-time clergy. The Stake consists of an area within which five to ten Wards or congregations are operative (Kephart 1987). It serves as an administrative unit and a link between the local Ward and Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. The head of the Stake is the Stake President (appointed by the First Presidency or

assigned General Authority) with two counselors of his choosing. He also has a twelve-man advisory/administrative unit called the High Council to oversee delegated tasks and to provide organizational liaison. Stake President nominates the Ward bishop and is in charge of the general well-being of the Wards under his jurisdiction, including the operation of various mutual aid organizations.

The Ward is the level of administration under which the majority of Saints function; therefore, it is the key socializing level, the stratum where Mormonism becomes second nature for the members. As such, it is the level where most activity takes place. The goal of each Ward is to involve every person in a "calling" where he may give service to others and develop leadership skills and personal talents.

The formal leadership structure at the Ward consists of the Ward bishop and his two counselors and clerks, various organizational committees, leaders of the auxiliary organizations, and priesthood quorums. The bishop is in charge of all administrative and organizational activities of the Ward. It is his responsibility to know when members are in need of assistance, counseling, or encouragement and to see to it that these needs are met. Thus, by using an army of male volunteers (home teachers) and female volunteers (visiting teachers) each family is personally contacted once per month. The bishop and auxiliary leaders also have the

task of organizing the various Ward meetings and activities.

All worthy males hold the "priesthood" and train to assume humanitarian or administrative responsibilities of the church beginning at age twelve. Groups of male units known as priesthood quorums train members to give service and to devote energies to a "calling" such as teachers and organization leaders. Females do not have quorums but they are trained in leadership and in giving service to others in female-based auxiliary organizations.[3] All priesthood and auxiliary organizations have divisions at the Stake and Ward levels.

If one is born into a Mormon family one becomes a member of record until one is either baptized after reaching the age of accountability (i.e. eight years old) or is dropped from the books at the age of adulthood. Righteous behavior and activity within the church organizations are essential for a worthy Mormon. A worthy Mormon is one who

> pays tithes and offerings, attends meetings, endeavors to be honest in dealing with others, observes the Word of Wisdom, and adheres strictly to the moral code that allows sexual relations only within the bonds of matrimony (Arrington and

[3]During the 1992 sesquicentennial year of the founding of the Relief Society, its president Elaine L. Jack coordinated charity and relief preparation and involvement for almost three million female members organized in 19,000 organized units scattered throughout 100 nations of the world (Hinkley, 1992:2).

Bitton, 1979:293).

Consequently, great effort is expended in encouraging all members to participate and contribute to the Church. From its inception the Church has encouraged missionary activity, family activities, and group socials.

Eternal Nature of Ordinances. The eternal nature of ordinances, according to LDS theology, encompasses the conceptualization of infinite progress or infinite development located in space and time. As such, time (and space) is divided into three "estates": pre-earth, earth, and post-earth. Pre-earth is the time and space when spirit birth occurred and the individual spirits developed in preparation for life on earth. Those spirit beings who merit coming to earth are then born and continue developing as people, hopefully preparing for life in post-earth or Heavenly glory.

According to the Mormon belief system there are three kingdoms of Heavenly glory. These three are: the Celestial (worthy church members), the Terrestrial (honorable people who did not receive the Gospel in its fullness after having had it presented to them), and the Telestial (lowest kingdom for those whose pre-Earth spiritual existence merited a chance to come to Earth but were not faithful in this "second estate"). The Earth is to become celestialized after the last resurrection with Jesus Christ as its King. All people who are not qualified to remain in the celestial world will spend

eternity in lesser kingdoms. Thus it is important for a Mormon to sanctify his life and do good in order to be prepared for the last resurrection (Grant, 1955).

Life on this earth for a Mormon is merely a segment of the infinite process of acquiring the necessary skills, knowledge, and education for him to become godlike; it is a progression, an exercise of intelligence, which follows the path laid by God. "As God once was so we are now, and as God now is so we shall become" (Leone, 1979: 31).

An element of the eternal nature of ordinances involved in the earthly progression is ceremonies which are conducted only within 43 special edifices on earth known as Temples (not to be confused with common church buildings or chapels). These special Temple ceremonies

> are private and may be attended only by properly certified Mormons.... Although the temple rituals are secret, their general outline is known. Through a long, involved series of ceremonies, Mormons witness the key sacred events of world history, learning from them the meaning of life and death and the way to lead this life in order to guarantee enjoyment of the one coming after death. The ceremonies may be performed for either the living or the dead.... [The Celestial kingdom] can be entered only by obedience to the gospel and by

> receiving God's spiritual blessings, called endowments, which are administered in the temple ceremonies (Leone, 1979:33).

One temple ritual is the Celestial Marriage ceremony where the husband and wife are united for time (Earth life) and eternity (past-Earth life). If the couple lives according to the precepts of the church and thus merits eternal glory, they will become a godlike unit (a family) in another world. However, family extends beyond the present nuclear and extended family to include the past and future one. The family is the divinely instituted "basic building block of the church" (Leone, 1979:41).

The Genealogical Society, one of their auxiliary organizations, is intrinsically tied to the Mormon belief in doing sacred Temple ceremonies for the dead. This involves tracing one's ancestry and then being baptized as a proxy for the dead person. While this practice is inherently tied to the importance of family, it is a derivative of two aspects of their belief system: the infinity of all things (no beginning and no end) and the fact that those who died prior to the restoration of the church did not have the opportunity to be saved. Thus, a proxy baptism allows the dead person to accept the baptism ordinance performed for him and if waiting, to enter the celestial kingdom where family bonds (i.e. husband-wife; parent-child) exist forever.

Having examined the Mormon concepts and beliefs concerning infinite development, church organization, and Deity; I have attempted to lay the conceptual foundation for theological and philosophical verstehen of Mormonism. Now I will trace the history of the group from their beginnings in New York to their migration to Mexico.

Mormons: History

Unlike the Anabaptists who did not have one single leader or founder, the Mormon church is the direct result of Joseph Smith's "divine call" to re-establish the one true church after the pattern of the one founded by Jesus in antiquity. Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet, was born in 1805 in Vermont. He was ultimately murdered by a mob in 1844 in Carthage, Illinois (Hexham, 1990).

Western New York in the early 1800s was "on fire" with religious social movements.

> Never in our history has so much religious fervor been packed into one geographical area. Bibles, revelations, preachers, and prophets came (and went) with startling rapidity (Kephart, 1987:220).

The people of the United States were expanding westward. The political mood was one of nationalism with "'Manifest destiny' as the political slogan of the period" (Nelson, 1930:14; 1952:30). This was the social climate in which Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,

was raised.

While he was a teenager Joseph Smith claimed to have received visions or revelations that instructed him to prepare himself to become the leader of the Restored Church (Hansen, 1987; Hexham, 1990; Kephart, 1987). Smith continued to have revelations throughout his life which not only included directions where to find a set of Golden Plates, and how to translate the ancient record now known as the Book of Mormon after an ancient American prophet, but also provided the beliefs upon which the formal church was founded.

> On April 6, 1830 Joseph Smith and five other men met for the purpose of founding a church based on that message, [the message of the Book of Mormon].... When the meeting opened, Joseph Smith announced that he had received a revelation from God which said, "Behold there should be a record kept among you: and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God" (Kephart, 1987:226).

Within a year after its founding the Church had established a community at Kirtland, Ohio where the first Mormon temple was built and the first school was established (O'Dea, 1972; Allen and Cowen, 1967). Following financial disaster at Kirtland, the Mormons attempted to establish

communities first in Independence, Missouri, then at Far West Missouri, and finally at Nauvoo, Illinois. However, from Kirtland, Ohio

> until Joseph Smith was murdered in Illinois in 1844, the church grew, migrated, was persecuted, saw considerable internal dissension, and was embroiled in conflict with hostile outsiders (O'Dea, 1972:120-121).

Several things combined to raise the fears of the neighboring Gentiles, especially in Missouri. One of these was their rapid growth which resulted from the Church's emphasis on evangelism. (From the beginning the Church sent out missionaries, not only among Anglos, but also among Native Americans). Consequently, the sheer number of Saints raised suspicion.[4] Another reason for these fears revolved around the Mormon theological divergence from Protestantism; they were not simply another revivalistic sect.

Coupled with this rapid growth of the Mormon communities and unique theology were

> [t]he outspoken opinions of the newcomers concerning their divine right to the region, their industriousness and thrift, their purchase of land, their friendly attitude toward the Indians, and

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[4]For example, there were over twelve hundred Mormons living in Jackson County, Missouri prior to their forced departure (O'Dea, 1957).

> their suspected abolitionism [of slaves] (a suspicion that the Mormons repudiated).... [These factors] produced Missourian antagonism toward the Saints, and that antagonism led to violence. The local people feared that their own properties would be expropriated by the Mormons for the establishment of Zion... (O'Dea, 1957:43).

One characteristic of the Mormon towns of Kirtland, Ohio, Far West, Missouri, and Nauvoo, Illinois was that they were planned according to the plat of the City of Zion. This plat was revealed to Joseph Smith and his followers as the ideal plan for the new Jerusalem. According to Nelson, the City of Zion

> was essentially a Utopia... a comunity [sic] designed for the dwelling place of the Savior, and of human beings perfected after the order of the Christian tradition; i.e. free from greed, selfishness, and vanity (1930:18)

Trouble between Mormons and their neighbors erupted in Nauvoo and eventually led to the arrest and murder of their Prophet, Joseph Smith. The death of their leader compounded the Saints' problems. Now, not only did they have problems with their Gentile neighbors, they also had internal conflicts concerning the Prophet's successor. Several splinter groups developed and followed various leaders. The main body of

members (Saints) decided to follow the Quorum of Twelve Apostles whose president was Brigham Young (1801-1877). He later became the second President or Prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Longfield, 1990).

Westward migration. Even with Joseph Smith's death, the Church experienced little or no relief from external violence. During the coldest winter on record (1844-45), mobs stormed and pillaged the city of Nauvoo forcing its residents to seek shelter across the Missouri River where they camped in Iowa for the winter (Stoddard, 1982 & 1980; Arrington and Bitton, 1979). In the spring of 1847 the first party of about 150 Mormons led by Brigham Young set out for the West, an area then claimed by Mexico -- called Deseret by Mormons, later reduced in size and known a the state of Utah (O'Dea, 1972; Leone, 1979; Turley, 1967). They arrived at the Great Salt Lake Valley in July of 1847. When Young saw the valley he supposedly "held up his hand and said, 'It is far enough. This is the right place'" (Kephart, 1987:228).

Immediately Brigham Young, as spokesman for the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, formulated plans for exploring and establishing Mormon settlements in the Great Basin region of Nevada, Utah, southern Idaho, and northern Arizona. By August 2, 1847 they began surveying for Salt Lake City following "Smith's plat for the City of Zion" (O'Dea, 1957:82). The temple site was selected by Brigham; adobe houses were erected

for the people; exploration parties were dispatched to find suitable locations for additional settlements so that as immigrants arrived new settlements were systematically colonized; and a government was organized.

Brigham Young, as church president and prophet, coordinated the entire process of colonization. He divided areas into units to be supervised by members of the Twelve Apostles and "called" men and their families to go establish new agriculture villages. Brigham envisioned a Mormon state, a new "Israel" for the Saints, a place from which the returning Jesus Christ would rule during the millennium. He saw this new state as being agriculturally based and oversaw the organization of the cooperative endeavors such as irrigation systems. To assist new converts from foreign lands he established a perpetual immigration fund.

Thousands of new converts from European countries and the Eastern United States poured into the Great Basin. At first they traveled on foot, in wagon trains, and by handcarts and then, with the completion of the railroad, they traveled via rail. When they arrived, the Great Salt Lake Valley was beyond the United States border; thus they hoped the previous conflicts with outsiders could be avoided. This was not to be the case.

Conflicts in the West. After the Mexican-American War ended in 1848, the Great Basin became part of the Utah Territory

under the control of the United States (Leone, 1979). Conflicts with the Gentiles (non-Mormons) of the United States were inevitable. Two factors contributed to the renewed struggles between the Mormons and the United States. The Mormons wished to have their own state. This desire for statehood invited scrutiny from the Gentiles. The second factor was a far more powerful catalyst leading to years of struggle and open conflict between Mormons and the United States; the practice of plural marriage (polygyny, commonly referred to as polygamy).

The belief in and practice of plural marriage arose from Joseph Smith's revelation concerning celestial marriage which is essentially the belief that marriages sealed in the Temple ceremonies establishes a family unit which endures beyond this lifetime for eternity. As such, the Old Testament practice of taking plural wives was restored, but not openly practiced until after they reached the Utah Territory. However, plural marriage was never widely practiced and according to Kephart (1987) it would be a mistake to assume it was. Whether polygyny was widespread or not, the fact that the Mormons condoned the practice became the platform for the United States' actions against them.

Three legislative bills were passed with the intent of controlling the Mormons and the Utah Territory; the 1862 Morrill Act ("anti-bigamy law"), the Edmunds Act of 1882, and

the 1887 Edmunds-Tucker Act. Together, these Acts outlawed polygamy, disestablished the Church as a legal corporation, and allowed the federal government to confiscate all church assets (O'Dea, 1957, 1972; Turley, 1967; Kephart, 1987; Tullis, 1987). The lives of the Saints were effectively disrupted, placing them and their church into financial ruin. Male heads of polygynous households went into hiding or were jailed. Consequently, even before the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, many people began to move beyond the borders of United States.

Colonies in Mexico for polygynous families. In 1884 and 1885 polygynous households were quietly advised by the Church to consider retreating to the safety of Mexico (Hardy, 1969). Several hundred families fled to the Mexican state of Chihuahua (Mills, 1954). By 1886 Colonia Juárez was established there and other communities soon followed. As was the case with previous Mormon settlements,

> [t]he church and the Mexican Colonization and Agricultural Company, a church-owned co-operative, immediately began co-ordinating and directing most of the colonists' work. With the fear of imprisonment now eliminated, these pioneers were ready and anxious to build up the "Kingdom" in Mexico (Hardy, 1965:444).

At first living conditions were difficult. There was a

shortage of necessary supplies such as food and clothing, which was compounded by epidemics spreading throughout the colonies (Hardy, 1965). Yet the efficient volunteeristic organization and sheer determination of the Mormons soon paid off. Within a few years they had built a schoolhouse, an irrigation system, a grist mill, a furniture factory, a sawmill, a tannery, and a harness shop; they had planted orchards, gardens, and crops; and they had established mercantiles (Kindrick, 1899; Mills, 1954).

In the meantime, church leadership had changed. Brigham Young had died between the passage of the Morrill and Edmunds Acts in 1877 and John Taylor, a polygamist, became the next President and prophet of the Church. Refusing to "divorce" his spouses after the United States statutes were passed, Taylor went into hiding to protect the church's properties and remained in hiding until his death in 1887. Taylor's successor, Wilford Woodruff, announced the "manifesto" in 1890 which ended the future polygynous marriages and required church members to live in compliance with the laws of the United States (O'Dea, 1957; Kephart, 1987; Grant, 1955; Turley, 1967). After 1902, the Church "adopted a policy of excommunicating any member known to practice polygamy" (Kephart,1987:239). This policy of excommunication for practicing polygyny applied to all members in all nations who adopted plural marriage after the "manifesto" date but did not

require existing polygynous families to be "legally" destroyed.

The Mormon colonies in Chihuahua continued to prosper until 1912 when the Mexican Revolution made it unsafe for them to remain in Mexico. Many temporarily went to United States border locations awaiting the time they could safely return (Hardy, 1965; Mills, 1954). After the Revolution many of the colonists returned but

> only two of the original eight colonies have survived to the present time [(1965)]. And Mormon enterprise in Mexico today, a half century after the exodus, is but a shadow of its former appearance and renown (Hardy, 1965:452-453).

Having recounted the early histories of the Mormons and the Old Colony Mennonites, we see both groups as products of utopian movements, of persecutions, of religious identities, and of migrations. To the extent that both groups see themselves as chosen people similar to the Israelites of the Old Testament, we can safely say their respective religions establish their world views and determine their social structures and social systems which allow them to pursue their religious goals in an increasingly secular world.

Chapter Three

MENNONITES AND MORMONS: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Social institutions are patterned conduct "which define the limits of sanctioned behavior" (Mercer, 1956:137) or are "interrelated system[s] of social roles and norms organized about the satisfaction of an important social need or function" (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969:206). Robertson (1989:55-56) characterizes institutions as tending "to resist change," being "interdependent," tending "to change together," and being "the site of major social problems".

Given these characteristics of social institutions, I have chosen to focus on several interrelated aspects of major social institutions for my comparison of boundary maintenance mechanisms utilized by the Old Colony Mennonites (OCM) and Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormons). To the extent that unique religious beliefs were the impetus for the development of their respective ways of life, all social institutions of the OCM and LDS contain traces of institutionalized religious traditions.

For example, both groups have religious and moral obligations to care for their own people. These obligations led to the establishment of their welfare systems (mutual aid organizations); systems they have institutionalized to care for their own people. For the most part, these organizations are boundary maintenance mechanisms rather than systemic

linkages.

The primary agent of socialization in most cultures is family. In cultures where all social systems are intertwined with the religious system, as they are for the Old Colony Mennonites and Mormons in northern Mexico, the family has an added significance, a religious duty to insure its offspring are successfully socialized into the religious community.

Formal educational institutions are perhaps second only to the family in their influence as socializing agents. Both the Old Colony Mennonites and Mormons run their own schools. The quality, subject material, and structure of the school systems reflect the importance each group places on informal and formal education. In as much as the teaching process surpasses mere formal education (i.e. schools), informal education is the ever present influence exerted on younger generations by their elders and on all generations by their peers. Durkheim (1956: 91) contented that "[t]here is an unconscious education that never ceases." Religious traditions also determine what form of education is acceptable, circumscribes the limits of career choices, and defines appropriate recreational behavior.

In a world governed by a market economy, every subgroup must have mechanisms for interacting with the larger society. The Old Colony Mennonites and Latter-day Saints are no exception. For most subgroups the economy is the cultural

area where their boundary maintenance mechanisms are the weakest and the systemic linkage with the outside world are the strongest.

The Mennonite and Mormon colonies have survived in northern Mexico for roughly 100 years by utilizing strong boundary maintenance mechanisms. However the intended configurations these mechanisms take distinctly reflect their respective religiously based worldviews. The OCM attempt to protect themselves from the outside world while the LDS attempt to maintain their way of life by controlled adaptations that enable them to function efficiently in the larger society.

Thus, when examining social institutions, it is often difficult to determine where one institution begins and the other ends. However, for the purpose of organization, I have chosen to arbitrarily divide social institutions into the broad headings of family, education, and community.

Mennonite Church and Community

The Old Colony Mennonites believe, first and foremost, that they are God's chosen people; a people destined to always live in a hostile environment (world). For them their "total way of life is sacred: they live the way God wants them to live" (Redekop, 1969:84). As such, they believe that as long as they stay true to the church by remaining separate from the outside world and taking care of their own, they are following

God's will and will be blessed. However, if they are not obedient to the church, and by application, God, they will be punished. Herein lies the theocratic power. The clergy are God's emissaries, thus the moral and spiritual protectors of His people.

The following example demonstrates how the clergy protect and lead their "flock" while allowing the laity to willingly conform. It also exemplifies the hierarchy within the community.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s polio was a problem in Mexico. The Mexican government requested that my informants go among the Old Colony and convince them to have their children vaccinated. Since my informants were medical personnel from a different Mennonite group who knew Low German and were acquainted with the OCM way of life, it was assumed they would be more successful than Mexican government agents in obtaining this permission. The procedure that my informants followed shows the chain of command in the OCM structure.

First, the bishop for each colony was consulted. Once he gave his consent the "word" was spread and the vaccinations administered. However, each father could choose whether or not his children were vaccinated. In one case, a father refused and subsequently one of his children contracted polio. At this point he requested that the rest of his children be

vaccinated and they did not contract polio. News of this incident spread and from then on permission was much easier to acquire with no one refusing to allow their children to be vaccinated.

This process of gaining access to the community depicts an important form of boundary maintenance, both the internal process and the protection from the external. Had the bishops not granted permission for parents to have their children vaccinated, most parents would not have consented, but any who had most likely would have been "banned" if not excommunicated from the church.

For the OCM, remaining separate from the "world" means living separately, not owning "worldly" goods, and not having "worldly" friends or close contacts. No one from outside the colony can live among "God's chosen" and no one who was not born Old Colony will ever become "God's chosen." Although in recent years there has been some infiltration by outsiders, the following quote from an Old Colony member captures their fundamental belief of being chosen and separate.

> It does not matter if the outsider is a better Christian and adheres to the Bible twice as much. He belongs to the world. There is no hope for the Mexicans to ever come out of the world (Redekop, 1969:31).

Here too the experience of my informants demonstrates to

what extent outsiders are rejected. In the early 1960s it became apparent there was a need for a medical facility among the Mennonites near Cuauhtémoc, Chihuahua. The intent was to build a clinic in one of the central villages of the colonies. After initially receiving permission to establish the clinic and move into a village, the clergy changed their minds and requested that my informants leave. The bishops feared the influence of "worldly" people living in their midst. Subsequently in 1964 a clinic was established in a neighboring Mexican village, a village on the periphery of the Mennonite colonies. Since my informants were no longer living among the Old Colony, their influence presumably was less and so many OCM sought medical attention at the clinic. In fact, it was very common for there to be more OCM people served in the clinic than non-OCM, especially by the midwives.

From the above examples we can extrapolate the power structure of the community (i.e. the bishop is the head of the colony and the father is the head of the family) and identify the strong boundary maintenance mechanisms of this "encysted" group. In the case concerning the location of the clinic, we see how the OCM create a permeable membrane[5] by manipulating their system to their satisfaction and benefit (systemic linkage).

[5]permeable membrane is a term that indicates penetration of a controlled border by persons, goods, services, ideas, and cultural patterns (Stoddard, 1988).

The language of the OCM church service is predominantly High German with an interspersing of Low German (the language used in social settings and in the home). The ministers do not write their sermons, but rather recite sermons that have been passed down from minister to minister over many generations. The service does not include Sunday school and children under twelve years of age do not attend church. The OCM feel that since Jesus did not go to the synagogue until he was twelve neither should their children.

There are three religious rites of passage for an Old Colony Mennonite: baptism, marriage, and death. Before an individual can be married, he or she must first be baptized and become an official member of the Church. Baptism is preceded by catechism which entails memorizing questions and answers in High German. However, the process leading to baptism is a community effort in that each person seeking baptism must have a sponsor. Usually the sponsor is a parent whose responsibility it is to get the young person to want to join the church. Therefore, if the person does not desire church membership it reflects negatively on the sponsor. Thus, through the sponsor the clergy maintain social control over non-members.

Redekop (1969) suggests that frequently it is the desire to get married that motivates the young people to join the church, not necessarily a desire for membership. Francis

(1948) maintains that the practice of routinely baptizing people in their late teens developed in Russia as a response to the government's mandate that only members of the Mennonite church were eligible for the special privileges mentioned in chapter two. Consequently, baptism has become an institutionalized tradition rather than the Anabaptist's concept of a believer's baptism.

Mennonite Families

The OCM family structure is a modified form of the patriarchal family or what Redekop (1989) describes as quasi-extended. The grandparents, parents, and children are all very important with property transferring within the family. The father is the formal head and has absolute authority within his family (superseded only by the clergy if the father has been excommunicated). His voting rights in the church and at village meetings where community decisions are made symbolically solidifies the father as the family spokesman and decision-maker.

Parents attempt to acquire enough land to give each of their sons farmland. Wealthy families with only a few sons often contribute to their sons-in-law's holdings. If the bride and groom are not from the same village the female usually leaves her village and moves to the male's village. However, if land is not available in his village or if she inherits land then the groom moves to her village (Allen and

Redekop, 1987).

"Large families are considered to be the will of God" (Redekop, 1969:68) and children are valued and nurtured in the OCM way of life. This tends to encourage a high fertility rate among Old Colony Mennonites. It is the child's duty to be obedient to his parents and to the Church. Children are taught they are not to disagree with or to question their parents and elders. Thus, from childhood on Old Colony Mennonites are taught obedience to their church.

Children begin doing chores at a very young age and progressively take on more responsibility, and in this way learn to be good farmers and farmers' wives. A "good" OCM never stops working until he dies. By working hard and following the institutionalized traditions he is doing God's work.

One characteristic of the Old Colony Mennonite extended family is that family ties often circuitously remain even after a deviant is no longer considered to be in full fellowship with the Church (has been excommunicated). This may take the form of relatives who are now members of a more liberal Mennonite group coming to visit or continuing business interactions. These familial contacts frequently introduce their young people to cultural taboos such as modern conveniences and also reduce the fear, thus the power, behind the threat of being "banned" themselves.

Mormon Church and Community

Just as the Old Colony Mennonites believe their way of life is sacred, so too, as members of the "Re-established" Church of Jesus Christ, Mormons believe their lifestyle follows the way God intended His children to live. Unlike the OCM who utilize negative sanctions to maintain their membership and do not "invite" non-OCM to join them, Mormons encourage members to be highly active both within their communities and in the world at large. Thus, while the OCM attempt to remain an isolated closed society via powerful boundary maintenance mechanisms, the mandate of Mormonism requires its constituency to be participatory members of the larger society while remaining a worthy member of the church.

Worthy Mormons live according to the Word of Wisdom, give one-tenth (tithe) of their income to the Church, regularly volunteer their time and services in the activities of the Church, and participate in the Chapel rituals (Sunday services). They also periodically participate in Temple ceremonies.

Mormon Families

Mormons place great importance on family and are encourage to have large families. Special efforts are made to spend time together as a family. For example, Monday night is "family night;" the time when nuclear families spend the evening working, playing, or studying as a group with all

members having their responsibilities. Fathers and mothers are viewed as the spiritual and physical guides or helpers of their children, just as the Deities help their children. It is in this setting that the first leadership education, decision-making and group identity begins.

Most Mormon males participate in two years of volunteer mission work when they are approximately twenty years of age. Frequently, this entails going to a foreign country and learning the language of that country. Although females over the age of 21 also may volunteer for an 18 month mission, only about ten percent of all missionaries are females (Stoddard, 1992). These missions, funded by the individual and his family, not only fulfill the church's teachings concerning proselyting but also take the young person outside his home community, thus requiring him to remain faithful (separate from) while living among the Gentiles (socio-cultural linkage).

To the extent that shared experiences create a primary group identity, a feeling of being different from others; Temple Work, family, priesthood quorums, and volunteer missionary work are all agents of group solidarity. These agents are invaluable as boundary maintenance mechanisms, in that they facilitate the internalization of Mormonism without which socio-cultural linkages could potentially result in a weakening of group cohesion in this subgroup.

Mennonites and Education

The OCM schools are designed to enable children to achieve the skills necessary to function as useful members of their religious agrarian community. This means they acquire the

> basic literacy skills [(in German)] and computational abilities related to ranching, agriculture, and marketing their respective products... (Bixler-Márquez, 1990:103).

All boys and girls attend school. The schools consist of grades one through six (without actual gradations) and the curriculum is reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Texts include a primary spelling and reading book which contains the ABCs, Confessions of Faith, Ten Commandments, and ends with the Lord's Prayer (Redekop, 1969); Martin Luther's translation of the Bible; the catechism; religious song books (without musical notes); and sometimes mathematic workbooks and tracing cards to practice penmanship (Bixler-Márquez, 1990). Classes are conducted in Low and High German. (Adult males acquire an oral proficiency in Spanish through their business contacts with Mexican nationals, but females usually remain monolingual.) The teacher has a sixth grade education from one of their schools. His salary is paid from the school tax charged landowners and tuition paid by parents.

Redekop and Hostetler (1965) maintain that the OCM

fiercely guard their education system because they realize it is a necessary boundary maintenance mechanism and perpetuator of their life-style. However, Redekop and Hostetler concentrate on the evasive quality, or the barriers erected between the OCM and the larger society, in their educational system. While it is true that linguistic differences maintain barriers and that the simplicity of the curriculum limits members' functional abilities to an agrarian way of life, I contend there are numerous "hidden" agendas beyond the mere avoidance of outside influences involved in their system.

To begin with, since children do not attend church services, schools are their first encounter with a formal religious socializing agent. Thus, it is no accident that the vast majority of the allowable learning materials are religious in nature. Likewise, the lack of structured individual grade-level instruction in the classroom reflects the "brotherhood" concept held by the community. Differentiation by grades leads to ranking which runs counter to this concept. This is not to suggest that there is no differentiation; rather, institutionally it is minimized.

Another possible "hidden" agenda related to what Redekop (1966:204) refers to as the "intentionally anti-intellectual nature of the schools" is to discourage reading because books and periodicals are a potential source of uncontrollable contact with the "world;" plus if one is reading one is not

working. However, ultimately

> the conscious transmission of a precious heritage by its very nature causes people to examine what is being transmitted and unintentionally serves to open the doors and windows to the world" (Redekop, 1989:190).

This then is becoming the dilemma of the OCM which the Mormons avoid with their approach of internalization of traditions through adaptation rather than limitation.

Mormons and Education

Education is an integral aspect of the Mormon Weltanschauung. The concepts of intelligence and self-improvement underlie most of their sacred and secular teachings and practices. Allen and Cowan (1967:113) succinctly state it: "The commitment of the Church to education, both spiritual and secular, has been one of the great 'constants' in the changing world of the twentieth century." Consequently, not only is formal education (school) stressed, but all forms of education. An important characteristic of Ward organizations (i.e. priesthood quorums, youth organizations, and women's auxiliaries) is education. Women's auxiliaries include learning skills for teaching children, for running a home economically and efficiently, and for general family welfare.

Sunday services include formal Sunday schools and

leadership training which is led by the laity. In communities where there are no church schools, seminaries (religious studies) are conducted before the public school day begins and church Institutes are strategically located near many public universities to assist college students in a well balanced education. Frequently, family night (Monday) also includes educational activities. Even the missionary program is considered an educational benefit in that it enables missionaries to acquire skills that they may not otherwise gain. For example, language skills and cultural awareness developed while on a mission may later translate into job opportunities or help to define an individual's interests and abilities.

Immediately upon establishing colonies in northern Mexico, the Mormons erected a school building. Today the Juárez Academy is a thriving bilingual (English- Spanish) institution with both Mormon and non-Mormon students whose graduates can enter either Mexican or North American universities without difficulty (Bixler-Márquez, 1986). Many of these graduates attend Brigham Young University in Utah or Hawaii or Ricks College in Idaho.

For the most part, the Mormon males and females from the colonies are proficient in both English and Spanish. Those who are not bilingual are usually immigrant spouses of colonists. This enables them to easily function in either the

United States or Mexico which many of them do for business, social, and religious reasons. This bilingualism is no accident. It is a direct product of the Mormon educational beliefs.

At times the emphasis on education becomes a mixed blessing for the Mormon colonies because the young people leave for college and mission work, experience the larger world, and become specialized in careers which are not marketable in the colonies. Thus, they are over educated and cannot return to their home community. Mormon youth from the colonies in Mexico may meet their spouses who are not from the colonies while attending college or doing church work and return to live in their home colony; others follow their mates to a location far from the colonies. Therefore, while educational improvement allows socio-cultural linkages to develop, it also creates the weakening of local boundary maintenance.

Mennonite Occupations and Careers

There are few acceptable occupational choices open to an Old Colony Mennonite. The entire culture is centered on agriculture. The preferred and most prestigious occupation for a male is that of farmer. A successful agriculturalist is working with God's creation and fulfilling his purpose on this earth. An unstated but intended consequence of this internalized belief is the fact that farming tends to entail

isolation (boundary maintenance through territoriality).

However, in keeping with their self-containment, the OCM still require numerous occupations which complement farming. These include owning or operating machine shops, furniture manufacturing shops, cheese factories, village stores, gas stations, parts stores, and such things. Most of these alternative occupations are private endeavors and may be only supplemental sources of income. Others, such as cheese factories are community owned cooperatives which are managed by elected boards and run by paid personnel.

Gender roles are sharply defined for the Old Colony Mennonites. Consequently, there are few options open to an OCM female. Her role in life is that of wife and mother (few OCM females remain single). She is responsible for preserving and preparing food for her family. She and her daughters are responsible for the care of the house and young children, as well as gardening and assisting with other chores and harvest.

As I stated before, the economic reality is that the OCM must exist within the larger society. Cash crops and services are a necessity. Consequently, interaction with non-OCM is inevitable at the market place. In Mexico, Spanish is the language of the market. Therefore, Old Colony men learn Spanish as a necessity while women rarely interact enough with non-OCM to need to learn any language other than that used within their colony.

Redekop and Hostetler (1966) maintain that the economic goals of the OCM are to expand and improve their farming operations. However, they are not to have business partnerships with non-OCM nor are they to develop close friendships with non-member business associates. Frequently, several members of the colony become liaisons between the colony and the Mexican society. Redekop and Loomis (1960) observed the emergence of status-roles centered around the liaison individuals (i.e., community tax collector, consul who learned enough about the legal system to assist members in petitioning for citizenship and passports, livestock spotter who notifies the buyers which families have cattle to sell, and the importer). By having only a few members with regular outside contacts the group maintains its boundaries and still allows convenient and justifiable penetrations from the larger society of the "encystment."

Over the years there has been an increased interdependence between the OCM and local Mexicans in the Cuauhtemoc area. As their farms expand and younger families are forced to migrate to areas where land is available, a seasonal shortage of OCM laborers develops. Consequently, local Mexican peasants are employed as day laborers for such endeavors as hoeing. The OCM need the Mexicans for labor and the Mexicans depend upon the OCM for their supplemental income; thus the interdependence.

Mennonites and Mutual Aid

The Old Colony Mennonite practice of mutual aid originated in their Anabaptist beliefs -- beliefs rooted in the concept of brotherhood -- and developed into specific institutions and traditions in the Mennonite colonies in Russia. Two of these institutions are fire insurance and the Waisenamt (an estate protection system). Their fire insurance is similar to that of the larger society, but only members of the colonies are "insured." Each landowner is assessed a tax according to his holdings and this is placed in a "communal pot." Then when a member suffers a loss from fire, he receives funds to facilitate survival and to rebuild.

The Waisenamt is a trust organization which protects and manages the estates of orphans, widows, and old people. This organization is managed by elected officers who are respected members of the community and serve as trustees of the estates. They settle disputes between heirs and collect any money owed to the estate.

Another aspect of mutual aid is seen in the OCM joint endeavors of building and maintaining roads, bridges, schools, churches, and other communally owned structures. Every family is assessed and expected to contribute funds, labor, material, or equipment. In keeping with this mutual caring for each other, friends, neighbors, or family will stay in the home of a person who is ill (around the clock) and assist with any

"choring" or harvesting that is needed. When there is a new baby in the home they provide the family with food so the mother does not need to cook.

Mennonites and Recreation

Historically the Old Colony Mennonite system only condoned one recreational activity, visiting with family and friends. This continues to be the most acceptable form of recreation. Great pleasure is derived from visiting. Redekop (1969) maintains that gossip and rumor are a source of entertainment for them.

Many hours are spent conversing with fellow OCM. Sundays and special holidays, days when work activities are curtailed, are visiting days. During the week errands to village stores and to a neighbors are as much occasions to visit and gossip as they are for the stated purpose of purchasing, borrowing, or taking care of business.

This visiting or gossiping is a form of boundary maintenance in that "word of mouth" rapidly carries the good, the bad, and the ugly throughout the community. It was the manipulation of this favorite activity which enabled my informants to vaccinate OCM children against polio. A deviant teacher knows the Lehrdienst will almost immediately hear of his deviancy. If the clergy wishes to informally warn a deviant they merely let it be "known" they are going to visit him in the very near future. Usually the deviant receives the

"message" and ceases his inappropriate behavior before the clergy actually visit.

In recent years changes in behavior among the OCM young people suggest a potential breakdown in these boundary maintenance mechanisms of social life. Traditionally, the youth visited as they walked the village streets in separate groups of girls and boys. Now as the automobile becomes part of the allowable culture, other recreational activities are being incorporated by the young. Silva's expose in the El Paso Times (1991), depicts the young men as driving around with radios blasting, drinking beer, interacting with young women, frequenting bars, and occasionally attending dances in the neighboring Mexican communities. All of these activities are verboten in the OCM belief system, yet without structural mechanisms of adjustment or recreational options and with the added mobility afforded by the automobile, the potential for disaffection increases. In response to this behavior, the community is beginning to accept "activities such as sports, art and music" (Hege, 1991: 10). Silva's depiction is undoubtedly that of only a minority of young people. Nevertheless, changes have begun among the marginal few which will require the group to make major adjustments in its traditional boundary maintenance mechanisms. This is a situation that Mormons have not had to face because their recreational boundary maintenance mechanisms have already

incorporated appropriate outlets for their youth.

Mormon Occupations and Careers

Unlike the Old Colony Mennonites, there are few occupational options which are prohibited for a Mormon. He is expected to be skilled in whatever he does. Consequently, he strives to acquire education and self improvement which translates into many professional occupations and specialties. Unfortunately for a member of the Mexican colonies, this frequently requires him to relocate outside of his home community. For the most part the colonies are agriculturally based, meaning local career opportunities are limited to an agricultural infrastructure (i.e. banker, shop keeper, a few medical personnel, and the normal farm related opportunities).

While relocating away from the home community limits the local population growth, this can be an advantage for agricultural communities in that for those who remain in the community there is sufficient land available. Thus, the Mormon colonies are less likely to experience the stress of a land shortage which is felt by Old Colony Mennonites who periodically suffer from this internal pressure.

Mormons and Mutual Aid

Throughout their history Mormons have practiced various forms of mutual aid including the Perpetual Immigration Fund, used by early European converts to pay their way to America with repayment going to others. Cooperative endeavors such as

building and maintaining irrigation systems, school buildings, church buildings and Temples, and saw mills were centrally planned and begun by means of "callings" by church leaders. However, the mutual aid system that best depicts the essence of Mormonism is their welfare system, a recent follow-up to an earlier communal system called the "United Order" where property was held in common and parcelled out according to need. From the beginning, it insured the temporal as well as spiritual needs of the Church were met. However, since idleness is not acceptable behavior for a Mormon, this means that those receiving assistance must willingly help themselves or work for assistance.

> The purpose of the welfare program from the beginning was to see that no worthy member of the church would suffer for want of the necessities of life and to insure that everyone who could work would have work to do (Fisher, 1978:79).

Over the years this system has taken several forms reaching its current structure during the 1930s when Mormon leadership attempted to not only assist members in dealing with the Great Depression, but to

> do away with idleness, abolish the dole, emphasize the value and the necessity of work, create a proper economic attitude, and help people to help themselves (Fisher, 1978:84).

The welfare program encompasses numerous organizations and auxiliaries (i.e. Women's Relief Society, Bishops' Storehouses, Stake farms, regional canneries, etc.), both locally and internationally, with the Ward level being the normal level of action. In times of crisis and natural disasters the efficient bureaucratic hierarchy of the Church enables them to rapidly mobilize and assist their fellow "brothers" and "sisters" as well as distribute millions of dollars of food and clothing to non-member victims of war and disaster (Hinkley, 1992). This is predominantly a volunteer organization with most of its funding coming from the monthly fast offerings of its members (money or food equivalent to that needed for two meals per person) and the commodity budget assessments (Fisher, 1978).

According to the Welfare Services Handbook it is first the individual's responsibility to be self-reliant; once he has done all he can, his family is to assist him; and after the family has done all it can the Church may assist worthy members (Fisher, 1978). Each family is to stock one year's supply of food (much of which is home grown and preserved), clothing, and if possible, fuel. Two Church programs, priesthood home teaching and the Relief Society visiting teacher, assist the Ward bishop in identifying members' needs.

> When ward organizations are functioning properly, bishops know both the welfare needs of all members

as well as corrective action that has been taken or is planned (Fisher, 1978:86).

The Welfare Program is one area where the Church hierarchy complements the well-being of the membership. Since reports of local activities and needs are funneled upward through the channels of the church structure, the General Authorities are always aware of the membership's needs throughout the world wide community. Thus in times of regional crisis, assistance can be mobilized rapidly and efficiently.

Here then we see one form of boundary maintenance in that usually the welfare system assists worthy members. At the same time we see an agent of socio-cultural linkage, because this system is potentially an international network system. As such, the Mormon mutual aid system is not only far more complex than the Old Colony Mennonite's system, it also is less "encysted".

Mormons and Recreation

For a Mormon recreation is as important to a well balanced life style as eating nutritionally balanced meals. Even during the long trek west from Illinois to Utah, the early Saints enjoyed evening dances before retiring for the night. Group activities such as games, dances, plays, and concerts are the preferred leisure activities. Other than developing skills and talents, individual activities are less

common.

Children are encouraged to learn to play musical instruments, participate in team sports, and join acting troops. Even church chapels contain cultural halls used intermittently for dances, basketball games, theatrical productions, and celebrations. In keeping with the family orientation of Mormonism, most church socials are family activities with all age groups represented. Large family reunions are commonplace.

In essence, enjoyable group activities or recreation are as essential to the Mormon way of life as are the sacred ceremonies within the Temple. It not only facilitates relaxation, it contributes to the sense of group identity and to healthy "chaperoned" interaction for young people. Thus, their way of life is perpetuated and boundary maintenance is continued.

Summary

By examining social institutions of the Old Colony Mennonites and Latter-day Saints we see how each group has a distinct pattern for maintaining its social cohesiveness. The OCM protect themselves via traditionalized prohibitions and limited access to information about and interaction with the world outside their closed community. Protection, not adaptation, characterizes their approach to group solidarity. On the other hand, the Latter-day Saints perpetuate group

cohesion by stressing unity through activity and improvement. heir approach is prescriptive not prohibitive.

Chapter Four

SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

Although the Mennonite and Mormon colonies in northern Mexico are both physically isolated communities (territoriality), only the OCM have attempted to maintain their group cohesion through total social and cultural exclusiveness ("encystment"). The Mormons have institutionalized change and interaction within the larger society through their volunteeristic values of intellectual and social improvement (socio-cultural linkage).

Tracing the history of each group allows us to pragmatically observe the development of their respective value and belief systems. Undoubtedly the early persecutions experienced by both groups contributed to the solidification of their group identity, the "we" and "they." However, both groups would maintain that it was not conflict with the outside world, but divine inspiration and "calling" which separated and established them as a group.

The levels of bilingualism maintained by both groups epitomizes their respective approaches to boundary maintenance. The OCM retain Low German as "their" language while reserving Spanish for the outside world; thus, females rarely acquire even a minimal proficiency in Spanish and males acquire enough for business transactions. On the other hand, the LDS stress proficiency in English and in Spanish for both

males and females.

Both groups have institutionalized their values in their social institutions. By so doing each has created a dialectic relationship in that living according to their institutions perpetuates the values and beliefs of the institutions while at the same time reinforcing the process of socializing the members into following the institutions. Each group's Weltanschauung is passed on to successive generations first in their homes by parents, then in their formal education and religious systems, and through work and leisure with family and friends.

It seems to me that one of the central differences in the OCM and LDS beliefs in which their respective boundary maintenance mechanisms are founded is their conceptualization of what happens to them at the end of this earthly life. For the OCM death is the transitional phase into heaven for eternity, therefore their goal is to maintain what they see as their worthiness to be in God's presence. The Mormons believe the eternalness of life is a progression into the next kingdom and eventual god-like progress thereafter. This leads them to be less static, as it were, and more pro-active, striving always towards a balance of health, intellect, and relaxation. Their concept of eternal family unity contributes to their concentration on group activities and mutual aid, while the OCM limit their mutual aid to group survival, not improvement.

In spite of the fact that the Old Colony Mennonites come from a background which initially utilized adaptation, over time they developed a rather inflexible institutionalization of their traditions. This inflexibility is exemplified in the ministers reciting sermons written by their forefathers, the students rotely memorizing the instruction materials from previous generations, and young people routinely mastering the questions and answers of the catechisms in order to become marriageable members of the church. However, a truly isolated culture is doomed to death (Fuentes, 1991); therefore, although cultural changes for the OCM have only been slightly perceptible in the past, they continued to occur. More recently a growing minority is creating a climate for more rapid change requiring adaptation by a society intrinsically opposed to rapid change.

Unfortunately, transitions are rarely painless and evidence suggests the OCM's natural increase in population, as in Prussia and Russia, is creating stress on their colony and economic systems. A "good" Old Colonist is a farmer and without land he can not farm; his options are limited to working for other Mennonites, opening his own shop if he has the money and ability, or migrating to a new location. According to Abraham Berg, an OCM political leader: "A lot of people don't have land and don't have work to do" (Gartner, 1992). Without work and with only limited literacy the

potential breakdown of their system is magnified. Silva's (1991) report in the El Paso Times is an example of what can happen as mobility and unstructured leisure increase in tightly controlled communities such as theirs. Leisure, without constructive options such as the group activities and recreation the Mormons have incorporated into their social systems, frequently allows for uncontrolled "membrane permeation."

On the other hand, the Mormons, by centering their social systems on volunteerism and progressionism, have avoided the pitfall of limitations. Their structured activity-centered way of life leaves little time for blatant deviancies. Besides this, the Mormon infrastructure facilitates transitions. For example, a member can leave the colony, move to any other Mormon community, and immediately have a new support system and a sense of community in continuity. This is achieved through the priesthood quorums for males and the Relief Society for females. Thus the very structure of the church enables mobility (a structural form of socio-cultural linkage) while still maintaining internal boundary maintenance mechanisms.

The exodus from the Mormon colonies continues among the youth in pursuit of employment opportunities which utilize their acquired formal education and training. While this constant population depletion of Mormon Anglos will most

likely retard colony population growth, it will not lead to the extinction of the colony. The community and national network that Juárez Academy students establish with Mexican nationals, both Mormon and non-Mormon, will continue to facilitate socio-cultural linkage, thus reinforcing the Anglo Mormon stability in the community. With the constantly increasing number of Mexican national converts to the church who achieve higher levels of education and move up the socio-economic ladder, there is an increased probability of future inter-marriage between middle-class Anglo and Mexican (ethnic) Mormons. If this were to occur, the composition of the Mormon colonies could change over time, but the dynamics would not vary appreciably. Perhaps this is a potential area of research for future social scientists attracted to this phenomenon.

The Old Colony Mennonites appear on the surface to be experiencing a reduction in the strength of their boundary maintenance mechanisms, but this probably does not foreshadow an end to the OCM way of life. Rather, in light of their Anabaptist-Mennonite background of periodic splintering, it probably represent yet another developmental branch, a liberalized-OCM similar to what remained in Canada after the emigration to Mexico. There will be a core population that will remain conservative, not unlike the Amish have done in the United States with marginal groups slowly pulling away

from traditional beliefs and lifestyles. This splintering and "defecting" continuum to more liberal Mennonite groups has always been an escape valve within the broad spectrum of "the Mennonites." Consequently, even if a significant number of the OCM were to migrate to another location it is very likely that another group of Mennonites would move into their vacated territory and those who remained behind would become incorporated into the new group. This is the historical cyclic pattern of migrations and adaptations in the Anabaptist-Mennonites' "world."

For this study I did not focus on the OCM women. However, little if any research on Old Colony Mennonite women has been done by women. As such, available secondary sources of male descriptions of how women think, act, and feel are those that are assumed to reflect female attitudes. No formal research has tapped into the rich informal female heritage of the OCM females' world. For outsiders to have any understanding of future adaptations within the OCM, such research is necessary.

One characteristic which is universal throughout the Anabaptist-Mennonite culture is that women among themselves openly discuss their opinions (normally denied) concerning the community as it is "ruled" by the men. Frequently, by listening to women-only conversations it is possible to discover future changes long before they are manifest in the

community's behavior. Consequently, this is a potential area for future research both for the OCM adaptations and for the changing female roles in highly traditional societies.

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